

Connecticut Emergency Managers Association

Minutes of the Meeting - Wednesday, February 25, 2004

The first meeting of the Connecticut Emergency Managers Association (CEMA) was called to order at 7:08 pm by Bruce Lockwood who made opening comments about the process of how the idea for the association came about.

Introductions were made around the room.

Mr. Lockwood then introduced Acting Director Burturla, Division of Homeland Security (DHS). Acting Director Burturla talked about the strong relationship between Homeland Security and Emergency Management. He stated that the DHS wanted to collaborate with everybody interested to make the State of Connecticut more secure. He also said he looked forward to the partnership with CEMA.

Mr. Lockwood introduced Dana Conover, Operations Chief of Office of Emergency Management (OEM). Mr. Conover talked about the support OEM and Director Flaherty has for local organizations and programs. He views CEMA as a customer and wants to do a better job working with the organization. He viewed OEM as a sounding board for CEMA to use to improve the organization. Mr. Conover suggested we move the meetings of CEMA around the five districts in the state to encourage more participants in the CEMA organization. He also stated that the State wants to hear from CEMA and wants to be invited back with Director Flaherty in the future.

Mr. Lockwood thanked Thomas Gavaghan for finding the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) for the meeting place and Mr. Jim Rush for allowing the meeting to be held at CHA.

A motion was made to make Connecticut Emergency Manager's Association (CEMA) formal name for the organization. A motion was made to accept the name.

Mr. Lockwood then introduced Mr. Hardy who spoke about the different examples of by-laws. Copies of bylaws from New Jersey, New York, and North Carolina were considered. These were chosen because each had different attributes which Mr. Hardy thought might be good for CEMA's bylaws. The bylaw examples were only to be used as a guide for creating CEMA's own bylaws. The group was asked to review the example bylaws for discussion at the next meeting.

Many suggestions were made on how CEMA should be organized. Ms. Katherine McCormack suggested that CEMA needed a Mission and Vision statement first.

There was discussion from the floor about who CEMA's membership included. Several people thought it should only be Emergency Management Directors, others thought membership should be open to anyone involved with Emergency Management.

Chief William Austin suggested that Mr. Lockwood be considered Acting President of CEMA until the organization held formal elections. The group accepted.

Mr. Conover from OEM offered the use of the OEM website and database to the group for use in contacting all the Emergency Management Directors. He also extended the use of his webmaster if CEMA wanted to develop their own web page off the OEM website. OEM also has a handbook that might be useful.

Comments were made about being careful regarding conflicts of interest between OEM and CEMA.

Discussion continued back to the formation of a mission and vision statement. Several items/needs were discussed.

- Bringing creditability to Emergency Management job descriptions.
- The need for Emergency Management professionals to have a place to network.
- Being able to communicate with other people doing the same job.
- Coordination, Collaboration, Consistency, Communication, Credibility, Continuity,
- Professional Standards, Public Education, Professional Development
- Political voice, Representation with the State, ...

Ms. McCormack suggested forming a Mission and Vision Statement Sub Committee. The motion passed. The Mission Statement Subcommittee members are:

Katherine McCormack - Hartford
Jim Hardy – New Canaan
Paul Connelly - Greenwich
Chief Bud Pendleton - Waterford
Ernest Frattini - Wallingford

DHS offered the classroom at Brainard Field as an alternate meeting place.

Mr. Conover volunteered the OEM Coordinators help in getting the word about CEMA out into the five districts. Director Flaherty will be making a tour through the State and it was suggested that Mr. Lockwood and Mr. Benyeda attend the meetings to talk about CEMA. Other volunteers were looked for to also help with this effort.

It was mentioned that SERC was having a conference on April 1st, 2004. Mr. Lockwood stated he would try to obtain an agenda.

The discussion continued onto the need to get the people who missed the meeting to become involved and attend the next meeting. Also discussed was the need to have fair representation for all communities. Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45pm

The next CEMA meeting will be 7:00pm, March 24th at CHA in Wallingford, CT.